

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 095898

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TO AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 095898

SUBJ: GABRIELLE YABLONSKY

REF: NEW DELHI 4916 AND CALCUTTA 0857 (NOTAL)

1. SMITHSONIAN CURRENTLY PLANNING EXHIBITION OF BHUTANESE ARTIFACTS AND HANDICRAFTS IN HONOR FORTHCOMING CORONATION OF BHUTANESE KING. IN THIS CONNECTION, SMITHSONIAN INVITED GABRIELLE YABLONSKY, AMERICAN CITIZEN WHO RECENTLY SPENT CONSIDERABLE TIME IN BHUTAN COLLECTING SUCH ITEMS, TO SERVE AS CONSULTANT. TERMS OF INVITATION WERE THAT SMITHSONIAN WOULD PROVIDE YABLONSKY ROUND- TRIP AIR TICKET INDIA TO WASHINGTON AS WELL AS HONORARIUM FOR LIMITED PERIOD AS CONSULTANT; AND YABLONSKY WOULD MAKE AVAILABLE ON LOAN HER BHUTANESE MATERIAL FOR INCLUSION IN EXHIBITION, AND ALSO ASSIST SMITHSONIAN ANTHROPOLOGIST EUGENE KNEZ IN PREPARATION.

2. SMITHSONIAN EMPHASIZES YABLONSKY HAS NEVER REPRESENTED INSTITUTION IN INDIA OR NEPAL. YABLONSKY HAD NO CONNECTION WITH SMITHSONIAN WHILE IN BHUTAN EXCEPT FOR EVERY MEAGRE ASSISTANCE TO KNEZ DURING THREE DAY OVERLAP THERE.

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PAGE 02 STATE 095898

EM IN LETTER TO KNEZ FROM KATHMANDU DATED MAY 9, YABLONSKY STATES " I WAS ADVISED TO GET OUT OF CALCUTTA AS ITS POSSIBLE I COULD GET A LOT OF HARASSMENT THERE BY THE POLICE, AND I ALSO HAD DIFFICULTY RENEWING MY VISA." ALSO SAYS SHE DOES NOT WISH TO RETURN TO INDIA. CALCUTTA REFTEL INDICATED SHE HAD PROBLEMS WITH INDIAN AUTHORITIES. SHE DEPARTED CALCUTTA SUDDENLY BY TRAIN FROM KATHMANDU APRIL 29 LEAVING BEHIND CAMERA EQUIPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS WHICH PRESUMABLY DECLARED ON ENTRY INTO INDIA AND MUST BE TAKEN OUT UNDER REGULATIONS.

4. IN VIEW INFORMATION CONTAINED IN HER OWN LETTER, AS WELL AS CALCUTTA REFTEL, SMITHSONIAN WISHES CANCEL INVITATION TO YABLONSKY FOR ROUND- TRIP AIR TRAVEL AND CONSULTANCY, AND WILL CANCEL PREPAID TICKET ADVISE PANAM CALCUTTA.

5. ACTION REQUESTED:

A. AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PLEASE CONTACT YABLONSKY SOONEST AT FORD FOUNDATION KATHMANDU AND INFORM HER AS FOLLOWS: SMITHSONIAN OFFER OF ROUND- TRIP TICKET FROM INDIA PREDICATED ON PAYMENT IN EXCESS INDIAN RUPEES. BECAUSE OF HER PROBLEMS WITH INDIAN AUTHORITIES, AND HER UNWILLINGNESS RETURN TO INDIA, BOTH RELATED IN HER LETTER TO KNEZ, SUCH USE OF RUPEES CONSIDERED INAPPROPRIATE AND SMITHSONIAN UNWILLING JEOPARDIZE IMPORTANT LONG STANDING RELATIONS WITH INDIAN GOVERNMENT. THEREFORE, SMITHSONIAN MUST WITHDRAW OFFER OF ROUND- TRIP AIR TICKET AND HONORARIUM AS CONSULTANT. IF YABLONSKY ASKS ABOUT SHIPMENT OF MATERIAL COLLECTED IN BHUTAN BY KNEZ AND YABLONSKY, WHICH NOW WITH BHUTANESE STATE TRADING CORP IN CALCUTTA, INFORM HER THIS QUESTION UNDER URGENT CONSIDERATION BY SMITHSONIAN AND WILL BE SUBJECT OF SEPARATE TELEGRAM. SMITHSONIAN WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY COMMENTS AFTER MESSAGE DELIVERED YABLONSKY AND ALSO ANY OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION.

B. AMCONGEN CALCUTTA REQUESTED ALLOW RESERVE BANK OF INDIA CLEARANCE PROCEDURE ON SHIPMENT TO TAKE OWN COURSE UNTIL RECEIPT FURTHER SMITHSONIAN INSTRUCTIONS WHICH EXPECTED SHORTLY. SMITHSONIAN UNDERSTANDS ENTIRE SHIPMENT IN NAME OF SMITHSONIAN, AND YABLONSKY NAME DOES

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